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## LETTER FROM OLYMPIA.

It is exactly ten years since your correspondent arrived at the confluence of Alpheios and Kladeos, on foot, and saw the eagle's head, just found, fitted to the famous Nike of Paionios. Olympia has not yet lost the character it then presented of a great archaeological laboratory. The liberality of the Prussian Government allows the final collocation of the antiques in the new Museum to be conducted by a staff of German experts, through whose courtesy Altis and museums serve as seminaries of classical architecture and sculpture to frequent visitors. Incidentally, something of moment is discovered even at this late date. I may cite as examples the inscription by which the hitherto nameless "Southwestern Structure" reveals itself to be the true and only *Leonidaion*, and a fragment, observed only to-day, by which the accepted identification of one of the treasures receives a not superfluous corroboration ( $\Sigma \text{VP} \Delta \text{KO} \Sigma \text{IOI}$ ).

The site of Olympia is commonly approached by way of the Gulf of Corinth and the carriage-road from Pyrgos. A vastly more picturesque route is the bridlepath from Tripolis over the Arkadian passes. No other gives the traveller a notion of the peculiar features of the Eleian landscape. He will, indeed, have to duck himself often in the saddle while passing under the dense aisles of myrtle between the ford of the Ladon and the foot of Kronion.

The scattered drums of the temple of Zeus and the harmonic proportions of the Zingros Museum strike the eye simultaneously. The latter occupies a natural terrace on the slope of the hill of Druva, across the Kladeos, where its red roof has an advantageous green background. Its generous size (l. 45 m.) admits of a spacious entrance with staircases to a clerestory gallery, of two long lateral halls, four corner-rooms, and of a grand central hall (l. 26 m., w. 13 m.), two stories high. Behind it there is still room for what may be called the cella of the sanctuary, the Hermes Room. The axis of the building, and of the large hall, is north and south. The dimensions of the latter were determined by those of the gable groups from the temple of Zeus, which are already disposed along the two side-walls, opposite each other, and facing in their original directions, *i. e.*, the chariot race of Pelops and Oinomaos east, and the Centaurs and Lapithai west. Nearly all the figures are in place, fastened to the wall by means of large iron dowels, the number of which is necessarily increased by the broken condition of most of the statues. Innumerable fragments wait, on floor and tables, to be cemented in their respective places when all the larger pieces are securely attached. A big marble horse now swinging from a crane will presently complete the second quadriga of the eastern pediment, and with it the whole composition. The group of Alkamenes, similarly, lacks but one large piece, but is further from completion owing to the greater

number of the small fragments. Mr. Grüttner, the Berlin sculptor whose Olympian restorations in plaster have become widely known, has charge of the work. He tells me that he has recently assigned their proper places to over thirty new fragments in the western group. His method generally requires the modelling in clay of missing parts, but only in rare and unavoidable instances does he make these fillings permanent by substituting plaster. As is known, opinions can diverge but little on the placing of the western figures. For the eastern, Grüttner has adhered to the arrangement proposed by Ernst Curtius, perhaps unwisely. The visitor, however, will have the opportunity of comparing with it an illustrative model of Professor Treu's stricter construction. More to be deplored is the decision not to give the full height of her preserved columnar pedestal to the flying Nike of Paionios. The preservation of all the eleven triangular blocks and the amply sufficient altitude of the clerestory ceiling would have seemed to impose this. The gallery which was to allow a closer inspection of the statue, as it is, serves no purpose at all. The destruction of the recently constructed bridge over the Kladeos by a freshet of that turbulent river affords a pretext for leaving the larger part of the pedestal to lie in the Altis, despite the readiness of the Greek Government to meet all expenses necessary for the worthy mounting of all the Olympian treasures.

The twelve metopes, representing the labors of Herakles, are to be distributed at a suitable height on the walls of the main hall. At present they are filed in one of the lateral galleries. The marbles, and plaster-casts of the pieces and fragments removed to the Louvre by the "*Expédition de Morée*," make a curious patchwork. Greece could bring about a re-union of the *disjecta membra*, possibly, by the offer, to France, of a fair equivalent in other statuary of a more separable character. The news of the ratification of the treaty for the unearthing of Delphoi by the united efforts of the two nations has just reached Olympia.

In the shed at the foot of Kronion, which still contains most of the terracottas and bronzes, may be seen the rude tree against which the Hermes of Praxiteles was imprisoned during many years. Even now, he lies on his back on the stone floor of the room he is to occupy in the new Museum. It is not yet decided whether he is to stand on a new pedestal, or whether the old one is to be mended for the purpose. If an iron stanchion were not indispensable, one would wish him to be placed on a turntable; but with a north light falling on the marble from the left side, so as to illuminate the figure of the little Dionysos on his arm, there will hardly be occasion to regret the impossibility of this. In view of certain reports circulated by previous visitors, it may be useful to add that the marble has not suffered in its unworthy temporary situation: on the contrary, the red color of the hair, never very pronounced, is still distinctly perceptible.

In short, Greece may now take pride in the possession of three great collections of ancient sculpture, each of which possesses features in which it can account itself second to none. When the German archæological corps takes its final leave of Olympia, the Greek direction will remain: it is only to be hoped the Ministry of Public Instruction will provide what the German direction, amid many difficulties, has still supplied, to wit, the means by which special research can alone become possible on a site remote from the facilities of large centres of population, and to which it is practically impossible to bring even the most necessary handbooks, plans, *etc.* *Noblesse oblige*, and the well-planned general reorganization of the Greek archæological administration and service leads us to expect much.

ALFRED EMERSON.

*Olympia, Greece,*  
*March 20, 1887.*

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#### LETTER FROM SIDON, PHŒNICIA.

It has long been well known that the plain and the hills about ancient Sidon are full of interesting antiquities. The pots filled with 8,000 coins of Philip and Alexander, the sarcophagus of Ashmunazer with its Phœnician inscription, and other finds, have aroused general interest in the subject of hid treasure. At present all excavations are conducted by laborers who quarry for stones. The building-stones that they sell nearly repay them for their work, while any antiquities found in the rubbish of ruined buildings or in unopened tombs make the work remunerative. No systematic exploration has been conducted since the French occupation of 1860, when the necropolis south of the city was excavated. Two years ago hundreds of tombs were discovered and opened at the foot of the hills east of the city. These were all of the Roman period and yielded a harvest of trinkets, but nothing of historical value.

Lately, some workmen, while they were digging in an open field about a mile to the north-east of Sidon, came upon a shaft, about twenty feet square, sunk in the sandstone. When this was cleared of earth to the depth of 30 feet, a doorway was found in each of the four perpendicular walls. These openings had been built up with stonework; and, by the removal of a few of these stones, access was obtained to the rooms. The floor, walls, and roofs of these rooms were of the natural rock without any traces of plaster. This is in contrast with the Roman tombs referred to, most of which were plastered and some richly frescoed. Entering first the *south room*, two large sarcophagi meet the eye: the one on the right, of black marble highly polished, but without any ornamentation; the other, of pure